

January 24, 2006

The Honorable Bob Taft
Governor, State of Ohio
77 S. High St., 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Governor Taft:

As President of the Mayors' Association of Ohio, I am writing, on behalf of our entire membership, to request that you veto SB 82. This bill is a despicable attempt by the General Assembly to render the vote of all Ohioans meaningless. Ohio voters adopted the Home Rule provisions of the Ohio Constitution. Exercising their right to vote on matters of local self-government, local voters in many cities and villages adopted residency requirements for their municipal employees in concert with those Home Rule provisions. The courts have upheld those local decisions for decades.

Now, through the passage of SB 82, the General Assembly would overturn nearly all of those decisions without any regard for the judgment of those local voters and the courts which have supported those judgments. The bill would also overturn the judgment of local elected officials who, through councilmanic and other action, have imposed residency requirements on some or all of their employees through other legal means.

As a Mayor for many, many years, I take my oath of office very seriously and deeply respect the voice of my citizens. SB 82 is a bill that shows no regard for either.

I hope you will veto this terrible legislation and stand up for the Home Rule provisions of our Constitution and for voters across Ohio.

Sincerely,

Mayor William Gaskin
President of the Mayors' Association of Ohio